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Senate Sympathy for Colby Over Leaking of Secrets

By Norman Kempster
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Members of the Senate Government Operations Committee nodded approval yesterday as CIA Director William E. Colby complained that present laws require intelligence agencies to share secrets with too many congressmen.

Sen. Charles Percy, R-Ill., hailed Colby as "a great American . . . a great human being." Sen. Bill Brock, R-Tenn., said he was "disgusted" that the House Intelligence Committee has revealed activities the CIA wanted to keep secret.

Other committee members, of both parties, quickly said they shared Percy's admiration for the CIA director whom President Ford hopes to replace soon with former Republican National Chairman George Bush.

THE COMMITTEE response to Colby's testimony may indicate that the panel shares the administration view that too much has been revealed about intelligence activities.

Ford has not sent his recommendations to Congress, but Colby said his view was "parallel" to the thinking at the White House.

Although the Senate assigned the chore of investigating the CIA to a special committee headed by Sen.

Frank Church, D-Idaho, it is up to the Government Operations panel, headed by Sen. Abraham Ribicoff, D-Conn., to develop reform legislation on intelligence.

The Church committee yesterday formally approved a bill to create a permanent Senate Committee with jurisdiction over the entire intelligence community — CIA, FBI, National Security Agency and military intelligence organizations.

Church said after the closed meeting the vote was 7-0. Sen. John Tower, R-Tex., who earlier this week opposed any new committee, was not present.

THE BILL, to be introduced next week, will be sent to the Government Operations Committee for consideration. Creation of a Senate committee probably would invite creation of a parallel House committee.

Colby said a year-old law requiring the CIA to inform eight committees of the Senate and House of secret attempts to manipulate events abroad "won't work."

"Every one of the new projects that were subjected to this process has leaked into the public domain," Colby said.

McGeorge Bundy, the national security adviser to former Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, said the CIA is pursuing an impossible

objective in attempting to keep large-scale projects secret because there is no way to cover up "large military and paramilitary operation like the one recently undertaken in Angola."

"Since they are impossible, and fear of them is widespread and real, they should be ruled out," Bundy said. "If such large-scale covert operations are not plainly and credibly forewarned by the administration, they should be prevented by Congress. . . ."

Colby said Congress should establish a single Senate-House committee that would supervise CIA activities, pass on the agency's budget and handle any other legislative matters affecting intelligence.

"The fewer members that are on the oversight committee, the better," Colby said.

Colby said the proposed committee should voluntarily agree not to ask certain questions such as the identity of "deep cover" agents.

MEANWHILE Sen. Clifford Case, R-N.J., one of two members of the Senate Foreign Relations who receive CIA briefings, suggested the agency might be "orchestrating" leaks in an effort to discredit congressional efforts to control intelligence activities.